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Dr. V. K. JOHN :—" This Bill is a warning to the Government that they must be very careful in drafting the Bills that they introduce in the Legislature."

The motion was carried.

Clauses 2, 3 and 1 and the Preamble were put and carried one by one.

The Hon. Dr. T. S. S. RAJAN :—" I move—

'*that the Bill be passed into law*'."

Mr. PRESIDENT :—" The question is—

'that the Madras Essential Articles Control and Requisitioning (Temporary Powers) Amendment Bill, 1948 (L.A. Bill No. 2 of 1949) be passed into law.' "

The motion was carried.

IX.—THE MADRAS AGRICULTURISTS' RELIEF (AMENDMENT) BILL, 1949 (L.A. BILL No. 3 OF 1949).

Mr. PRESIDENT :—" This is a very small Bill."

Sri R. SURYANARAYANA RAO :—" This is not a very small Bill, Sir."

Mr. PRESIDENT :—" To-morrow is a non-official day. I want the few hours of sitting to-morrow to be devoted to non-official work. If the hon. Members co-operate with me, we can finish this Bill."

The Hon. Sri K. MADHAVA MENON :—" Sir, this is a non-controversial Bill and it was welcomed by the Members in the other House. I move—

'*that the Madras Agriculturists' Relief (Amendment) Bill*[a], 1949 (*L.A. Bill No.* 3 *of* 1949) *as passed by the Legislative Assembly be taken into consideration at once.*'

When we moved a comprehensive list of amendments to the Agriculturists Relief Act, this was really an omission. Section 13 of the Madras Agriculturists Relief Act, 1938, provides for the scaling down of all interest due on any debt incurred by an agriculturist after the commencement of that Act, so as not to exceed a sum calculated at 6¼ per cent per annum simple interest. This rate has subsequently been altered by the Government into 5½ per cent. As the definition of 'debt' in section 3 of the Act does not include rent, the interest on arrears of rents due from an agriculturist cannot be scaled down. The courts have awarded decrees at the contract rate of interest on arrears of rent, which is in some cases as much as 24 to 48 per cent. The Bill seeks to extend the rate of interest applicable to debts to the arrears of rent also."

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[a] Printed as Appendix VI on pages 917–918 infra.

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MR. PRESIDENT :—" The question is—

'that the Madras Agriculturists' Relief (Amendment) Bill, 1949 (L.A. Bill No. 3 of 1949) as passed by the Legislative Assembly be taken into consideration at once.' "

DR. V. K. JOHN :—" I am glad that the Hon. Minister confessed that this was an omission in the comprehensive list of amendments to the Act. I give the same warning as that I gave in respect of the previous Bill. The Government should be very careful in drafting the Bills. They should not allow such omissions to occur, and then bring in an amendment and waste the time of the Legislature."

THE HON. SRI K. MADHAVA MENON :—" If the hon. the Leader of the Opposition had pointed out the omission at the time of moving the comprehensive amendments, I would have made the correction."

The motion was carried.

Clauses 2, 3 and 1 and the Preamble were put and carried one by one.

THE HON. SRI K. MADHAVA MENON :—" I move—

'*that the Bill be passed into law.*' "

MR. PRESIDENT :—" The question is—

'that the Madras Agriculturists' Relief (Amendment) Bill, 1949 (L.A. Bill No. 3 of 1949) be passed into law.' "

The motion was carried.

The House then adjourned to meet again at 3 p.m. the next day.

X.—PAPERS LAID ON THE TABLE OF THE HOUSE.

Bill as passed by the Assembly and received therefrom in the Council :—

1. *The Madras City Pollice and Gaming (Amendment) Bill*, 1948 (*L.A. Bill No.* 10 *of* 1948).

2. *The Madras Commercial Crops Markets (Amendment) Bill*, 1948 (*L.A. Bill No.* 1 *of* 1949).

3. *The Madras Essential Articles Control and Requisitioning (Temporary Powers) Amendment Bill*, 1948 (*L.A. Bill No.* 2 *of* 1949).

4. *The Madras Agriculturists Relief (Amendment) Bill*, 1949 (*L.A. Bill No.* 3 *of* 1949).

5. *The Madras Municipal and Local Boards (Amendment) Bill* (*L.A. Bill No.* 4 *of* 1949).